



**TOPS Working Committee Meeting
Meeting Minutes - FINAL
Wednesday, March 6, 2019**

Members Present: Jason Alwine, Lily Weissgold, Lee Milner, Blaze Panariso, Joe Lavorini, Nancy Hobbs, Jeff Mohrmann, Bob Falcone, Paula Krantz

Members Absent:

Parks Board Liaisons Present: Carol Beckman, Jason Rupinski

Parks Board Liaisons Absent: Mina Liebert

Youth Ambassadors Present: Emma Hybl, Jack Keenan, William White

Staff Present: Britt Haley, Kurt Schroeder, Kim King, Christi Mehew, David Deitemeyer

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Jason Alwine brought the meeting to order at 7:33 a.m.

Agenda Preview Committee Chair Jason Alwine announced the agenda for the meeting.

Announcements

Britt Haley, TOPS Program Manager

- Announced there will not be a site tour in March. The locations that need to be visited are inaccessible. These properties will be considered in April or May.
- Stated that when visiting properties they are not always under contract and the purpose is for the TOPS Working Committee to learn and gain more knowledge of the site before considering them for acquisition. This is a difficult situation and it's not always appropriate to invite other individuals/entities due to this sensitivity issue. Although they are public meetings and posted, as a general policy the Committee needs to be careful when dealing with these situations.

Scott Abbott, Regional Parks, Trails and Open Space Manager provided an update on the ranger team. Their on-site presence has increased and they are involved in various national days to set up informational tables at trailheads, share knowledge with citizens and promote their trail philosophy. The team has applied to be a hotspot for the "no trace left behind" project and hopefully gain national recognition.

Joe Lavorini, TOPS Working Committee member stated the Rocky Mountain Field Institute will be holding a "Fund your Fourteener" event next Wednesday, March 13th at the Pioneer Museum from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. There will be speakers, food and beer.

Bob Falcone, TOPS Working Committee member said his Podcast today will be with Joe Lavorini. They will be discussing Devil's Playground trail and the Colorado Fourteener Initiative (CFI).

Approval of Minutes – February 6, 2019

Motion: To approve the minutes of the February 6, 2019 TOPS Working Committee meeting.
1st – Lily Weissgold, 2nd – Blaze Panariso, Approved, Unanimous

Citizen Discussion

Susan Davies, Trails and Open Space Coalition (TOSC) Executive Director stated tomorrow evening a candidate forum will be held at Colorado College at 6:30 p.m. The topics include open space and energy. Answers will be posted on the TOSC website.

Action Item

Blodgett Open Space Interim Use Plan (Presented by David Deitemeyer, Senior Landscape Architect)

[Link to PowerPoint presentation](#)

The TOPS program successfully acquired approximately 64 acres of open space for the expansion of Blodgett Open Space. The property adjoins a portion of the southern border of the existing Blodgett Open Space. Parks Staff proposes the adoption of an interim use plan for the recently acquired parcels to accommodate appropriate public access and management for the property prior to a more robust public master and management plan process.

The goals of the interim use plan allow for the development of sustainable public access to the open space as well as providing management and operational guidelines for management of the resources.

- The plan proposes development of approximately 1,500 linear feet of trail. The trails will connect existing gravel roads on the property to adjacent neighborhood access points and to the existing trail system on the existing Blodgett Open Space.
- The plan proposes a gravel trailhead to accommodate space for 15 vehicles and serve as a designated interim trailhead for the new open space.
- The newly acquired parcels are to be adopted into the Blodgett Open Space and will collectively be managed by the TOPS Ranger program as one cohesive open space. TOPS Ranger staff proposes to use the existing horse barn for their maintenance operation (for use as a maintenance facility). Further management improvements include the repair of existing wire fencing along the east and south boundaries, placement of wayfinding and informational signage, erosion control and mitigation, invasive weed management and rogue trail monitoring and removal.
- A neighborhood meeting was held on January 31, 2019 to present the interim use plan to the neighbors and provide an opportunity for public feedback. There was strong support for the interim use plan including additional parking for the open space. There were however, significant concerns about the trailhead being used after hours, including loitering, building of camp fires, trash dumping and other illegal activities. The public comments received expressed a strong desire for the Parks Department to gate and lock

the trailhead when the open space is closed at night.

- After discussion with TOPS ranger staff and other stakeholders, the decision moving forward is to not gate and lock the trailhead on a nightly basis. Parks staff would like to adaptively manage the parking lot to see if any issues and what kind of issues may develop before fully committing to manage the area by locking a gate nightly.
- Additional measures will be taken to increase the Colorado Springs Police and private security patrols of the trailhead. The Peregrine Home Owners Association (HOA) has expressed a desire and the willingness to direct their privately hired patrol to routinely patrol the trailhead.

TOPS Working Committee member Lily Weissgold asked Andrew Bird, Peregrine HOA President if the HOA and security patrol has gone through racial bias training and if not, are they willing to go through this training. He replied he thought they had but will check. They are bringing in extra patrol from the Colorado Springs Police Department three times a week to patrol the Peregrine neighborhood.

TOPS Working Committee member Joe Lavorini stated this is an interim use plan. The parking lot area seems to be definite. Do you anticipate this area to change? David Deitemeyer stated it depended upon the public process and neighborhood feedback so it is hard to commit and give an answer. Joe stated if it is changed it would be unfortunate. Britt Haley said if there is a significant need for additional parking and it serves an important purpose it would probably be a remaining use.

TOPS Working Committee member Blaze Panariso inquired about the master plan process and when a permanent plan would be implemented. David Deitemeyer stated they will initiate discussions in the next month regarding the 2020 budget and workload. He anticipates the public process to start in 2020 and within two to three years the master plan process to begin.

TOPS Working Committee member Bob Falcone asked if screening can be closer to the ridge if more parking spaces are added. David Deitemeyer said there will be an opportunity for four more parking spaces/stalls to be added with this design and additional screening can be constructed.

TOPS Working Committee member Nancy Hobbs asked if there will be interim signage. David Deitemeyer replied that signage will be at the trailhead along with a map that displays connectivity and wayfinding will exist around the route. This signage will be installed in Spring and then more detailed and bigger signage will be installed once the signage/wayfinding project gets underway.

Susan Davies, Trails and Open Space Coalition (TOSC) Executive Director, stated this has been a quick process working with the Peregrine HOA and it should be celebrated.

Motion: A motion to approve the Blodgett Open Space Interim Use Plan.

1st - Lily Weissgold, 2nd, Bob Falcone, Approved, Unanimous

Presentations

Rocky Mountain Field Institute (RMFI) Update (Presented by Alex Hladkyj, RMFI Program Manager)

[Link to PowerPoint presentation](#)

Rustic Hills Water Resources Project Update (Presented by David Deitemeyer, Senior Landscape Architect and John Adair, Stormwater Construction Manager)

[Link to PowerPoint presentation](#)

Adjournment

Motion: To adjourn the TOPS Working Committee meeting at 8:55 a.m.

1st – Bob Falcone, 2nd – Nancy Hobbs, Approved, Unanimous